



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Resources and Development Committee
discusses road conditions in the former Bennett Freeze area**

HARDROCK, Ariz. – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee met at the Hardrock Chapter, to discuss the road conditions in the former Bennett Freeze area with members of the Dził Yijiin Regional Council.

Comprised of several chapter including: Black Mesa, Blue Gap, Hardrock, Forest Lake, Pinon, and Whippoorwill, the DYRC serves as an advocate for community project support and to assist in local chapter governments to develop their five management system for governance certification.

RDC members also toured N8031, a 20-mile stretch of dirt road from Pinon to Hardrock frequently used by local residents.

“We would like to work on legislation that could help fund paving the road,” said RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta). “From what we saw there is a lot of work that needs to be done for the safety of those living here.”

The DYRC explained to the RDC that the road is a serious safety hazard for first responders during emergency situations, which has continued to worsen even after the lift of the Bennett Freeze enactment.

In 1966, former BIA commissioner Robert L. Bennett enacted a development freeze due to land disputes between the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe.

Development of any sort was strictly prohibited throughout the area until 2009, when President Obama signed a bill that repealed the law that created the freeze.

Representatives from the DYRC said they are working to set up meetings with the Hopi Tribe, to discuss improvements and the paving of N8031.

The Navajo Division of Transportation continues to work with the RDC to review jurisdictional and geographical challenges associated with the existing road.

The RDC is scheduled to hold their next meeting on Nov. 19 in Window Rock, Ariz.

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